

INTO THE HEIGHTS

PROPHECY

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Come Up Hither

"Come up hither . . . a throne was set in heaven . . . and out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings" (Rev. 4:1-10).

All through the Bible the clear teaching is that there will come an end to this present age in which we are living. There will follow an age in which God's kingdom will be on earth, and His will be done here as it is in heaven. This complete change will take place at the second coming of Christ.

In between this present and the new age there will come a short period of terrible judgments upon this God-defying and God-forsaking world which will clear the earth for the Lord to take over. The very first thing that will happen when that day of judgment comes will be the "come up hither" into the Lord's presence, of all believers, either out of their graves or out of this world if they are then alive. Then will come the storm of judgment as signified by the "lightnings and thunderings" which were the first thing John saw coming from the throne in heaven.

Of course, the world does not believe that anything like that will ever happen. People are saying: "All things continue as they were . . ." (II Pet. 3:4). They reason, "Nothing has happened yet, and nothing will happen."

A certain cartoon appeared some time ago in one of our magazines. A man had fallen out of the 64th-story window in one of the skyscrapers in New York. A man on the 24th floor happened to see the falling man as he passed his open window on the way down. The falling and doomed man waved at the amazed onlooker and smilingly called: "Nothing has happened yet." But, something was certainly going to happen. Just as certain will something happen to this world one of these days when the end of this age has come and Christ returns.

It may start as a day like any other day. The sun will rise on time. Men will get out of bed as usual, shave, drink their coffee as on other mornings. They will drive their cars or ride the bus to work as on other days. Some will get up with a grouch, some with a hangover. Farmers will get out their tractors to work in the field. Businessmen will hurry on to their stores. Kids will be walking to school with a book under one arm and a baseball in the gloved hand. Trains will start their runs on schedule. Buses will depart for distant cities. Ships will be crossing the oceans filled with expectant travelers. Planes and stratocruisers will shoot across the heavens. Lawyers will cross over to the courthouses to plead their cases. Fashionable women will hurry downtown to try on fashionable clothes.

Speculators will scheme on how to double their money without honest work. Well-dressed crooks will plan to sell some gullible people some nonexistent oil wells. Some people will be starting on their long-looked-for vacations. Telephone lines will tingle with morning gossip and hot business deals. Some men will use the phone to arrange for a secret meeting with a secret woman. The banks will be open for business. Racehorses will be groomed for the afternoon races. Bookies will mark down bets from the usual suckers. The bars in drinking houses will be polished and ready for their willing victims. Doctors will prescribe another dose of pills. Television shows will be on, radios will give forth the latest hits and the last-minute news. Scientists will be looking through their microscopes, preparing some new means of destruction or some new way of saving a life. College professors will leave for their classrooms to teach the latest theories of the universe. Some people will start the day with prayer. Some will

start the day with cursing. In some homes there will be a fight before breakfast is over.

Yes, it will seem a day like any other day of the thousands of days that are past. And yet, it will be a day of days, like unto that seemingly ordinary day long ago when the angels announced: "Unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." That was seemingly an ordinary day when the God of the universe hung on a cross and shouted: "It is finished."

Suddenly it will happen! It may be that some great earthquake will shake the earth! It may be that some fiend will suddenly set off the pent-up powers man is supposed to be storing up for destructive purposes, in the A-bomb, or H-bomb, or C-bomb! I do not know whether some great outside phenomenon will accompany it, but I do know that such a day is coming. The Lord's trump will sound, and His own will hear His voice, and they will answer the summons of the Lord to "come up hither." The church will meet the Lord in the air. The Holy Spirit, too, will go back to heaven. The day of grace will be over. The day of the Lord will have begun. Antichrist will start his conquests, and the judgments of the great tribulation will be on for those who remain upon the earth.

Dear reader, what would happen to you if that day should come now? Would you be with those who will go to meet their Lord because they are ready for His coming? Only those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb will meet Him then. Christian friend, keep ever before you the promise of His coming. Do not be led away from His fellowship by anything that the world or the Devil may offer you.

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